



CHALLENGE FOR FILM-MAKERS

Find ways to convey the themes of the movie (e.g. through characterisation, props, costumes, cinematography, sound).

RELATED ACTIVITIES

[Character Building](#)
[One Ring](#)

CHALLENGE FOR STUDENTS



Brainstorm:

- What is a theme? Is a theme in a movie the same as its plot? Which do you think comes first (drives the other)?
- What are some themes that drive movies, television programmes, plays, stories, and songs?

TEACHING POINTS

The themes of a movie are sometimes called its layers - what it's really about. The plot is what happens - the main events and how they connect.

e.g. love, loss, conflict (good versus evil, right versus wrong, haves versus have-nots), corruption, justice, power



Read about the themes and plot of the movie in:

- Hobbits and the Shire (zone 2)
- Cultures and Races of Middle-earth (zone 3)
- A Magical World (zone 4)
- Temptations of Evil (zone 10)
- The Transformation of Gollum (zone 11)
- Warfare (zone 14)
- Creations of Evil (zone 15)
- Gimli and Legolas (zone 16)
- Boromir (zone 19).

Focus questions:

- What is the plot of *The Lord of the Rings*? (What happens in it?)
- What are some of the themes in the movie?
- What are some clues to the themes of the movie?

Possible response: Frodo and his friends try to save Middle-earth from destruction by Sauron, who's out to get the greatest of the Rings of Power.

Suggested themes: good versus evil; small overcomes big; corruption; greed; power.

Clues to themes: what happens in the movie (the plot), how the characters behave, what the characters wear and use, the sorts of images used (camera work, lighting, colour), the sounds used.



- Discuss how the following elements help to identify the themes in *The Lord of the Rings* (e.g. good versus evil):
 - characters
 - props and costumes
 - lighting and colour
 - music.
- Write your own plot outline for a short film. Identify the themes and describe how they will be communicated through the characters, props, costumes, images, music, and so on.
- Present and assess your work.

Extension:

If the movie took place today, who might the characters and events be? Write a synopsis of an event from the movie in a modern setting.

Characters

e.g. Frodo represents goodness and simplicity, Sauron represents evil, Gandalf represents wisdom, Arwen represents purity and beauty.

Props and costumes

e.g. The "good" Hobbits have simple clothing and equipment, and the "evil" Orcs have dirty clothing and equipment.

Lighting and colour

e.g. Lightness/whiteness are often used to symbolise good, and darkness/blackness to symbolise evil.

Music

e.g. Harsh, loud sounds might be used to show evil characters or events, and soft, peaceful sounds to show good characters and events.
